



City of Harrisonburg

Department of Planning and Community Development

409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
540-432-7700

www.harrisonburgva.gov/community-development

Memorandum

To: Members of City Council
From: Adam Fletcher, City Planner/Acting Director of Planning and Community Development
RE: **Sign Ordinance Variance to Allow Off-Premises Advertising**
Date: Friday, October 30, 2015

Michael's Auto Body and KAR Towing, with representative Eddie Edwards Signs, Inc., are requesting that businesses located at 3116 South Main Street (tax map 103-A-6), which has no road frontage, be permitted to have off-premises signage on an adjacent parcel. The proposed signage would be installed on the KAR Towing property at 3120 South Main Street (tax map 103-A-7). The sign would advertise KAR Towing, Michael's Auto Body and their tenant, which is currently Hertz. A graphic of the proposed sign is attached.

No off-premises advertisement is allowed under City Code, Section 11-7-6.1(1). However, Section 11-7-9, permits City Council to grant a variance to allow off premises signs for uses on parcels having no road frontage.

Section 11-7-9 of the sign ordinance states:

“This sign shall be the only freestanding sign permitted for the off-premises use(s) advertised. The area of such sign shall be determined by the City Council; provided, that the area of the off-premises sign shall not exceed the amount of signage previously allowed for an on-premises sign on the same lot. In addition, the off-premises sign area shall not be calculated against the allowable signage for the lot on which it is situated, but shall be counted against the allowable signage for the lot served by the off-premises sign.”

The ordinance further authorizes City Council in granting such a variance, to impose conditions of location, character, and other features it deems necessary in the public interest.

3120 South Main Street is permitted to have up to 177 square feet of signage. There is one existing, 7 square foot wall sign which will remain. All existing freestanding signs advertising KAR Towing will be removed from the property, leaving 170 square feet of signage available. The existing freestanding sign advertising Michael's Auto Body located on the Valley Lanes property at 3106 South Main Street will also be removed. This sign was granted under a Board of Zoning Appeals variance in 1991, which is a process no longer permitted. 3116 South Main

Street is permitted to have up to 160 square feet of signage. There is one existing, 16 square foot wall sign, leaving 144 square feet of signage available.

At this time, rather than having two freestanding signs on 3120 South Main Street, the applicants are requesting a shared 96 square foot sign, where 40 square feet will advertise the on-premises business (KAR Towing), and the remaining 56 square feet will be used to advertise the off-premises businesses (Michael's Auto Body and Hertz). If approved, both parcels would still have unused sign area allotments that could be used as wall signage on their respective buildings. Furthermore, it should be understood that approving the request does not prevent a second freestanding sign from being erected on 3120 South Main Street, which must meet a 30 foot setback.